

# Korea, the Never-Again Club, and Indochina

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Much has been written about the American military's cautious approach to the use of force in the post-Vietnam era. Journalists and academics have noted that contrary to stereotypes of the military as eager to employ American troops abroad, the military of the 1970s and 1980s has been a conservative, at times even restraining, influence on American foreign policy.<sup>1</sup>

A number of senior military officers have argued, in fact, that US troops should not be committed to combat unless certain conditions hold. Clear objectives should be established, public support should be relatively assured, and commanders should be given the freedom and forces necessary to accomplish their mission before the public tires of American involvement. When it comes to the use of force the United States should either bite the bullet or duck, but not nibble.<sup>2</sup>

The current conservative approach to the use of force is not, however, an entirely new phenomenon. Such sentiments certainly appear to be more universally shared now than before America's frustrating involvement in Southeast Asia, but what Samuel Huntington termed the military's "pacifist attitude" has been characteristic of earlier episodes in American history as well.<sup>3</sup> As an examination of the 1954 deliberations over intervention in Indochina shows, the impact of the Korean War was, to some degree at least, a precursor of the military's post-Vietnam thinking concerning the use of force.

## *The Korean War*

The Korean War was very frustrating for America's military leaders. It was the first "limited war" fought by the United States in modern times—limited in geographic scope, objectives, and means employed.<sup>4</sup> That

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it came just five years after the total victory of World War II added to the military's frustration; many senior officers found it unsettling not to gain a similar outcome in a war waged against what General Mark Clark later termed the "enemy's second team."<sup>5</sup> Fighting for a draw, as many of the combat commanders saw their mission in Korea, was not a pursuit to which they were accustomed.

Although both Democratic and Republican administrations viewed limitations on the use of force as necessary to confine the conflict, the limitations were difficult for many of those fighting in Korea to accept. The field commanders were frustrated by restrictions on the bombing of enemy bases, airfields, and other installations in Manchuria and China. American aircraft were allowed to bomb only the southern half of the bridges over the Yalu, for example, and were not permitted "hot pursuit" of enemy planes based in Manchuria. Proposals for a blockade of China and for bombing targeted at its industrial capacity to wage war also were disapproved.<sup>6</sup>

General Douglas MacArthur termed the restrictions "an enormous handicap, without precedent in military history." Those in the field came to feel that even the Joint Chiefs of Staff lacked the will to win. MacArthur, in particular, believed that Washington was denying him the tools to finish the job, that he had been relegated to a "no-man's land of indecision." And MacArthur was not alone; with the sole exception of General Ridgway, each of the other generals who directed the Korean War echoed MacArthur's calls for a military victory.<sup>7</sup>

Especially in retrospect, the Korean War came to be regarded by the military as precisely the type of costly and indecisive conflict to be avoided in the future. The memoirs of the military leaders of that era reveal the bitterness created by Korea. General Mark Clark, for example, later wrote of his "personal disappointment that [the United States] did not find it expedient to whip the communists thoroughly in our first shooting war with them," although he was quick to acknowledge "the worldwide factors which led Eisenhower to . . . seek an armistice." For Air Force General Nathan Twining, Korea confirmed that "America had become a 'paper tiger.'" Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, United Nations Delegate to the Korean Armistice Commission, wrote that the limitations imposed on allied

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military operations encouraged the adversary to keep fighting, weakened support for the war effort at home, and ultimately prolonged the conflict.<sup>8</sup>

Particularly unsettling for American military leaders, who during and after World War II were accustomed to broad domestic support, was the gradual erosion of public backing as the war dragged on and casualties mounted. Although few citizens had questioned the wisdom of President Truman's decision to support South Korea after it was flagrantly invaded by North Korea, the inconclusiveness of American involvement took its toll on popular support. The fighting continued, and over 54,000 Americans were eventually killed, while another 100,000 were wounded or taken prisoner.<sup>9</sup>

The public, meanwhile, became divided over the tactics of the war. Many citizens clamored for bombing or blockading China in spite of the Truman Administration's estimate that such actions could bring war with the Soviet Union. Others, impatient with mounting casualties and domestic economic controls, appeared willing to see the war ended on almost any terms. Public approval of President Truman, as measured by Gallup polls, fell to as low as 23 percent in 1951. General Eisenhower's victory in the presidential election of 1952 was in no small measure a result of the public perception that he would be better able to bring peace to Korea than would his opponent Adlai Stevenson. Thus the actual armistice in 1953, even though it included some concessions to the communists, was greeted with relief throughout the United States.<sup>10</sup>

### *The Lessons of Korea, and the Never-Again Club*

The Korean War held different lessons for different military figures. Some—termed “absolutists” by Richard Betts—felt that Korea showed the foolishness of limitations on the conduct of war. Others—whom Betts calls “pragmatists”—believed that Korea showed the necessity for such limitations.<sup>11</sup> For several reasons, however, absolutists and pragmatists alike harbored considerable sentiment against involvement in another *limited* land war in Asia.

The most important reason for this common conclusion was the perception by the senior military, whether of the absolutist or pragmatist persuasion, that the American people had little stomach for another prolonged limited war. This perception reinforced the absolutist belief in the necessity for quick, decisive military actions and prompted them to provide all-or-nothing advice during deliberations over intervention in Asia.

The pragmatists also tended toward all-or-nothing advice, but for different reasons. The pragmatists accepted the concept of limitations on the use of force. They worried, however, that cuts in America's conventional forces resulting from the Eisenhower Administration's strategic doctrine of massive retaliation—with its emphasis on nuclear weapons—had left the military ill-suited for fighting limited wars in rugged, tropical

terrain. The pragmatists thus viewed commitment of American units to a limited land conflict in Asia as a diversion of relatively scarce conventional reserves from preparation for combat in more important theaters such as Europe. Commitments in Asia were possible, they reasoned, only if there was a dramatic increase in the size of US ground forces, along with some restructuring to fit the new forces to the type of conflict anticipated. But even were such changes forthcoming, the pragmatists worried about public support for such an enterprise. As General Maxwell Taylor later wrote, Korea had “provided renewed evidence of our need for a crusading motivation or an inspiring slogan to offset the national urge to get an unpleasant job over quickly and to return to normalcy.”<sup>12</sup>

Opposition to involvement in another limited land war in Asia thus made “bedfellows of both the pragmatists and absolutists.”<sup>13</sup> Resistance to such limited involvements was most marked, however, among the Army generals who had served as commanders in Korea, and who subsequently rose to dominate the Army leadership. They were said to be members of what journalists called the Never-Again Club, a group that apparently drew its name from General Mark Clark’s warning in 1954 that “never again should we be mousetrapped into fighting another defensive war on [the Korean] peninsula.”<sup>14</sup> This admonition subsequently was widened to apply to Southeast Asia as well. Thus the “charter” of the Never-Again Club held



Courtesy USAMHI

Korea, 24 November 1951. US Vice President Alben Barkley (right, on platform) is shown pulling the lanyard of a 105mm howitzer, thus firing an actual round at communist forces. But public approval for the war diminished as stalemate set in, prompting some to resolve, “Never again!”

that the United States should not intervene in that region unless America was prepared to fight an all-out war, with the level of national commitment and mobilization necessary to accomplish the mission before public support eroded.<sup>15</sup>

### *Indochina I—Dienbienphu*

The first evidence of the extent to which the never-again sentiment held sway surfaced when several military leaders, particularly Army Chief of Staff Matthew Ridgway, vigorously opposed *limited* intervention to save the beleaguered French garrison at Dienbienphu in the spring of 1954.

The 1954 discussions over intervention in Indochina came after several years of growing US support for the French in Indochina—a region that was viewed as critical to American security interests in the Far East. It was not until the Spring of 1954, however, that the United States faced the prospect of direct military intervention. As late as mid-March 1954, the fear was not that the French fortress at Dienbienphu would fall, but that French war weariness would subvert the Western position at the upcoming East-West conference in Geneva called to consider Far Eastern problems. If the French accepted an unsatisfactory settlement, as Eisenhower Administration officials feared, the United States might have to arrange with other nations to continue the war without France.<sup>16</sup>

While Eisenhower and his advisers pondered the long-range possibility of American intervention in Indochina, Vietminh General Giap “tightened the noose around Dienbienphu.” Attacking with far more artillery than French commanders thought the communists had in Indochina, Vietminh forces had by 17 March captured two key French outposts and threatened the isolated fortress’s airfield. The prospect of a French defeat loomed large, raising the issue of immediate American intervention.<sup>17</sup>

The visit to Washington by General Paul Ely, French Chief of Staff, brought matters to a head. Ely arrived on 20 March 1954, his visit given new impetus by the turn of events at Dienbienphu. He was apprehensive about the outcome at Dienbienphu and admitted that a defeat there would make it difficult for France to hold out at the upcoming Geneva conference for terms acceptable to the United States.<sup>18</sup>

General Ely was worried not just about Dienbienphu, however, but about the prospect of Communist Chinese intervention in Indochina as well. He had been instructed to determine how the United States would respond if the Chinese sent jet fighters into Indochina. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles avoided a definitive response; the American reaction, he said, would depend on the circumstances, and would also require French accession to greater partnership than had existed to date.<sup>19</sup>

Admiral Arthur Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, was more encouraging about the prospect of American intervention if requested by the

French. He and General Ely discussed the possibility of a massive American air strike to relieve the siege of Dienbienphu. Code-named VULTURE, the plan called for as many as 300 aircraft, launched from US aircraft carriers and bases in the Philippines, to strike the Vietminh positions. General Ely left Washington "feeling that a request from the French for American intervention would receive a prompt and affirmative reply."<sup>20</sup>

The talks with General Ely strengthened Admiral Radford's conviction that the United States was facing a potentially critical situation. He informed President Eisenhower of his fear that events in Indochina might so deteriorate as to "lead to the loss of all [Southeast] Asia to communist domination." The United States must be prepared, he told the President, to react "promptly and in force, possibly to a frantic . . . request by the French for US intervention."<sup>21</sup>

Radford's plan for American air strikes generated little support among the Joint Chiefs. "They remembered the bitter and protracted experience in Korea," notes the *New York Times* edition of the *Pentagon Papers*, "and were not eager to repeat it." Only Air Force Chief of Staff Nathan Twining gave even qualified assent to Radford's proposal (Twining opposed more than a single air strike, insisting on French acceptance of conditions they were unlikely to accept). The other Chiefs "warned that air intervention at Dienbienphu would not decisively affect the outcome of the war." They also "questioned whether the limited tactical gains would be worth the risks of direct involvement." Chief of Naval Operations Robert Carney equivocated, while Marine Corps Commandant Lemuel Shepherd "dismissed VULTURE as an 'unprofitable adventure' that might damage United States prestige in a way that could only be recouped by intervention with ground forces."<sup>22</sup>

Army Chief of Staff Ridgway was the most direct in his opposition. He answered a request by Admiral Radford for his views on the desirability of recommending US air support for the French defense of Dienbienphu with an "emphatic and immediate 'No.'" Admiral Radford's plan, Ridgway later wrote, had an "ominous ring"; it was "that same old delusive idea . . . that we could do things the cheap and easy way by going into Indochina with air and naval forces alone." Ridgway felt sure that "if we committed air and naval power . . . we would have to follow . . . immediately with ground forces in support."<sup>23</sup> This echoed the conviction advanced several months previously by Vice Admiral A. C. David, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense:

Involvement of US forces in the Indochina war should be avoided at all practical costs. If, then, National Policy determines no other alternative, the US should not be self-duped into believing the possibility of partial involvement—such as "Naval and Air units only." One cannot go over Niagara Falls in a barrel slightly.<sup>24</sup>

General Ridgway also believed that none of those advocating intervention had an accurate idea of what such an operation would cost America in "blood and money and national effort." He felt it essential that the decisionmakers be fully aware of the factors involved, and thus sent to Indochina a team of Army experts in every field of military operations. Their mission, he recorded, was to "get the answers to a thousand questions that those who had so blithely recommended that we go to war there had never taken the trouble to ask."<sup>25</sup>

Contrary to what many discussions of Dienbienphu imply, however, the Army team's report was not submitted until two months *after* Dienbienphu fell.<sup>26</sup> Nonetheless, an Army position paper submitted to the National Security Council in the first week of April conveyed the essence of Ridgway's concerns and influenced the deliberations over intervention. In that paper, Ridgway made the following main points:

- US intervention with combat forces in Indochina is not militarily desirable . . . .
- A military victory in Indochina cannot be assured by US intervention with air and naval forces alone.
- The use of atomic weapons in Indochina would not reduce the number of ground forces required to achieve a military victory in Indochina . . . .
- The equivalent of [7 to 12] US divisions would be required to win a victory in Indochina, [the exact number depending upon whether the French stay or withdraw and upon whether the Chinese do or do not intervene] . . . .
- Requirements for air and naval support for ground force operations are five hundred fighter-bomber sorties per day exclusive of interdiction and counter-air operations; an airlift capability of one division drop; and a division amphibious lift.
- Two US divisions can be placed in Indochina in 30 days, and an additional 5 divisions in the following 120 days. This could be accomplished without reducing US ground strength in the Far East to an unacceptable degree, but the US ability to meet its NATO commitment would be seriously affected for a considerable period. The time required to place 12 divisions in Indochina would depend upon the industrial and personnel mobilization measures taken by the government.<sup>27</sup>

The Army position clearly challenged—and probably demolished—the notion that US air and naval action alone could turn the tide. Logistical problems would be immense; the logistical infrastructure in Indochina was virtually nonexistent, and was certainly inadequate to support the large-scale conventional military operations envisioned. The nearest bases would be 1000 miles away in the Philippines and 2500 miles away in Japan. Popular support within Indochina for US intervention



appeared questionable, and allied support was also much in doubt. In short, as a *U.S. News & World Report* article noted on 25 June 1954, Army planners were convinced that if the United States became “involved in war in Indochina, it [would] find itself in a far bigger, tougher fight than it ever faced in Korea.”<sup>28</sup>

Such concerns were shared to varying degrees by the leaders of the other services as well. With the exception of Admiral Radford, in fact, the senior military held grave reservations about intervention in Indochina. They were not opposed to intervention per se; rather they sought to avoid *limited* intervention, to avoid another Korea. Unless America was willing to intervene on a sufficient scale to achieve success, and to attack Communist China, which General Ridgway termed the “immediate and major source of Vietminh military power,” most military leaders were opposed.<sup>29</sup>

It is difficult, of course, to judge the importance of military reservations, particularly those of General Ridgway and the Army, in President Eisenhower’s eventual rejection of intervention.<sup>30</sup> Many other factors militated against American action as well. One was the lack of congressional enthusiasm for the Radford plan to use air and naval power. That plan received a lukewarm reception when Secretary Dulles and Admiral Radford presented it to eight key members of Congress on 3 April. The congressmen opposed the United States’ going it alone, and insisted on firm commitments of support from other nations. A resolution authorizing the President to commit American forces to Indochina would be forthcoming, they said, only if “satisfactory commitments” could be secured from Great Britain and other allies to support military intervention, and from France to “internationalize” the war and accelerate the move toward independence for Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Nor were the congressional leaders optimistic about the outcome of air and naval action. “Once the flag is committed,” they warned, “the use of land forces will surely follow.”<sup>31</sup>

The eventual failure to secure allied support, particularly that of Great Britain, was a crucial factor in scuttling interventionist plans. Allied support was necessary not only in the view of Congress, but also came to be viewed as essential by President Eisenhower.<sup>32</sup> On 4 April, the day after Dulles and Radford briefed congressional leaders, Eisenhower ruled out unilateral US intervention. American military involvement in Indochina could come, he decided, only upon the satisfaction of three conditions: formation of a coalition force with US allies—particularly the British Commonwealth—to pursue united action; declaration of French intent to accelerate independence of the “Associated States” (Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia); and congressional approval of US involvement.<sup>33</sup>

In the end, the British played the decisive role. Despite three weeks of active promotion by President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles—which included Eisenhower’s famous domino speech and several trips by Dulles to

London and Paris—British Prime Minister Churchill rejected “united action” to save Dienbienphu. Two days later, the National Security Council decided to “hold up for the time being any military action in Indochina” pending developments at Geneva.<sup>34</sup> Although Dulles continued the effort to organize united action, the fall of Dienbienphu on 7 May closed the issue of saving the French fortress.

### ***Indochina II—After Dienbienphu***

The fall of Dienbienphu did not, however, mark the end of deliberations over American intervention. The opening of the Geneva conference on 26 April 1954 had reawakened US fears that the French would use the negotiations as “a fig leaf of respectability” for their surrender of Indochina. On 7 May, following news that Dienbienphu had just fallen, President Eisenhower met with Secretary Dulles to again consider US intervention. It was decided that Dulles would mention to the French Ambassador that if certain conditions were met by the French the President would ask Congress for authority to intervene with US forces.<sup>35</sup>

After receiving Dulles’s communication, the French Premier told the US Ambassador in Paris on 10 May that France needed American intervention to save Indochina. That evening Eisenhower discussed the French appeal with Secretary Dulles, Secretary of Defense Wilson, and Admiral Radford. During the meeting, the President directed Dulles to prepare a presidential address for a joint session of Congress requesting authority to commit American troops in Indochina. Additionally, he ordered further contingency planning.<sup>36</sup>

By mid-May, however, the Joint Chiefs of Staff had swung further toward the view that involvement in Indochina would divert forces earmarked for other, more important contingencies, although it is clear that their formal position represented the uneasy reconciliation of divergent beliefs. On 26 May, they submitted a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense that stated: “*Indochina is devoid of decisive military objectives and the allocation of more than token US armed forces in Indochina would be a serious diversion of limited US capabilities.*” While generally supportive of the idea of “air-naval support directed from outside Indochina,” they cautioned against making a “substantial” air commitment. The Chiefs also placed considerable emphasis on “an offensive to attack the source of communist power” (the People’s Republic of China), as well as on “employment of atomic weapons . . . in the event that such a course appears militarily advantageous.” Additionally, they warned that in the event of US involvement, “it would be necessary to insure the degree of mobilization required to take care of the increased possibility of a general war.”<sup>37</sup>

Finally, the Army, in the form of a 19 May memorandum from the Secretary of the Army to the Secretary of Defense, continued to argue that

air and sea forces alone could not "solve our problems in Indochina," and that there was a "very evident lack of appreciation of the logistics factors affecting operations in that area."<sup>38</sup>

Once again, President Eisenhower decided against intervention. And once again it is difficult to judge the impact of the military's views and their highly contingent advice on the decision not to intervene. As before the fall of Dienbienphu, there were many other factors that argued against American military involvement. Most important, the United States and France were unable to agree on terms for US involvement. Although British backing was dropped as an American precondition for intervention, stiffer concessions were demanded of France, including an unequivocal commitment to internationalize the war and a guarantee that the Associated States could withdraw from the French Union at any time. The French never agreed to those demands, however, and added several conditions of their own that were unacceptable to Washington. "As the discussions dragged on inconclusively," George Herring has written, "each side grew wary." The French cabinet, under pressure from a war-weary National Assembly, "eventually concluded that it must exhaust every possibility of a negotiated settlement before considering prolongment of the war." Simultaneously, the French military situation in the Red River Delta near Hanoi deteriorated so badly that Washington decided intervention would be futile. On 15 June, Secretary Dulles informed the French Ambassador that the time for US intervention had run out. The fall of the French government and its replacement by one committed to a negotiated settlement sealed the issue. "From that point on," observed Herring and Richard Immerman, "the Eisenhower Administration devoted its efforts to attaining the best possible settlement at Geneva and to salvaging what it could in Southeast Asia."<sup>39</sup> Although coming years would see increasing American military training and assistance in Vietnam, the prospect of direct intervention would not resurface until the early 1960s.

### ***Conclusions***

Military objections, particularly those of General Ridgway, clearly influenced the deliberations over intervention in Indochina in 1954. Whether the military's views were decisive, however, is less apparent. Most likely, it was the military's misgivings together with political factors that led President Eisenhower to reject intervention. The military did not dominate the deliberations over the use of force, in short, but their voice was heard and their cautions were heeded.

Such an assessment of the importance of military views appears accurate in more recent cases as well. Military opposition to the use of force has been of great significance during deliberations over intervention abroad. In his study of decisions on the use of force during the period 1945-1973, for

example, Richard Betts concluded that "soldiers have exerted the greatest leverage on intervention decisions in those instances where they vetoed" the use of force. My own examination of decision-making in the post-Vietnam era produced similar findings.<sup>40</sup>

If history is a guide, therefore, the circumspect approach to the use of force that characterizes the Vietnam generation of military leaders is not just an understandable response to a frustrating military experience, but an important factor in American foreign policymaking as well. As columnist Joseph Kraft observed recently, "the skepticism of the military about applying force weighs far more on the president than does the sniping of the political opposition. On security matters, the professional soldiers carry weight with everybody in the country."<sup>41</sup>

## NOTES

1. Samuel Huntington, "Playing to Win," *Parameters*, 16 (Autumn 1986), 72-82.
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7. *Ibid.*, p. 153; William Manchester, *American Caesar* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978), p. 617; John W. Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap, 1959), pp. 197-205, 275; Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 365, 379; "You Can't Win if Diplomats Interfere," *U.S. News & World Report*, 20 August 1954, pp. 75-81; James A. Van Fleet, "The Truth About Korea," *Reader's Digest*, 63 (July 1953), 1-16.
8. Clark, p. 317; Nathan F. Twining, *Neither Liberty Nor Safety* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1966), p. 56; and C. Turner Joy, *How Communists Negotiate* (New York: MacMillan, 1955).
9. Ernest May, *"Lessons" of the Past* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973), p. 95. For comparison, over 58,000 Americans were killed in Vietnam.
10. Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power* (New York: John Wiley, 1960), p. 96; May, pp. 95-96.
11. Betts, p. 167. The terms "absolutist" and "pragmatist" were originally introduced by Morris Janowitz in *The Professional Soldier* (New York: Free Press, 1960), pp. 264-321.
12. Maxwell D. Taylor, *Swords and Plowshares* (New York: Norton, 1972), pp. 156-57.
13. Betts, p. 167.
14. Clark, p. 328.
15. *Ibid.*; Betts, p. 167; and Joseph Kraft, *Profiles in Power: A Washington Insight* (New York: New American Library, 1966), pp. 139-46.
16. George C. Herring and Richard Immerman, "Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu," *The Journal of American History*, 71 (September 1984), 343-63; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate For Change* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963), pp. 332-33; *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 88-92, 448-54; and George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York: John Wiley, 1979), p. 28.
17. "Did U.S. Almost Get Into War?" *U.S. News & World Report*, 18 June 1954, p. 35; Herring, p. 29; Herring and Immerman, p. 346.
18. *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the War in Vietnam: History of the Indochina Incident, 1940-1954* (Washington: Historical Division, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 20 August 1971, declassified in 1981), pp. 369-73a; Arthur Radford, *From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: The Memoirs of Admiral Arthur W. Radford* (Stanford: Hoover Press, 1980) pp. 391-97; and *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 455-60.

19. *Chronology of Actions on the Subject of Indochina Prior to the Geneva Meeting on Korea and Indochina in the Spring of 1954*, Box 82, John Foster Dulles Papers, Seely Mudd Library, Princeton Univ.; *History of the Indochina Incident*, p. 371; Radford, p. 393.
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21. *History of the Indochina Incident*, p. 373a; Radford, p. 397; *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 460-61.
22. *The Pentagon Papers*, New York Times ed. (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), p. 11; Herring and Immerman, p. 348 and n. 16; Betts, p. 21; Eisenhower, p. 254. The service Chiefs' views can be found in declassified memoranda (dated 2 April 1954) in the Ridgway Papers (Box 30) at the US Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.
23. Ridgway memorandum dated 021600 April 1954, Box 30, Ridgway Papers; Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier* (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p. 276.
24. *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 89.
25. Ridgway, *Soldier*, p. 276.
26. Even General Ridgway's memoirs seem to imply, certainly unintentionally, that the Army team's report had an impact on the decision over intervention to save Dienbienphu (*Soldier*, pp. 276-78). According to the *Pentagon Papers* (Gravel edition, I, 127), however, the Army team spent the period 31 May to 22 June "in the field"—thus not even beginning its mission until three weeks after the fall of Dienbienphu. The team's report was submitted to General Ridgway on 12 July 1954 and therefore could not have influenced the debate over intervention during the siege of Dienbienphu. (A copy of the report, still classified, is in the National Archives, File CCS092 Asia [6-25-48], bulky package 13.) In a telephone interview on 1 August 1986, General Ridgway told me that he did not receive any interim report from the team chief, Colonel David W. Heiman, prior to the submission of the report on 12 July. (It appears that two 1953 studies by the Plans Division, G-3, Army staff and a March 1954 memorandum by Major General James Gavin [the ACoFS G-3] were the basis for General Ridgway's judgments and for the position paper he submitted in early April 1954. See Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960* [Washington: US Army Center of Military History, 1983], pp. 195, 201-02.)
27. *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 92-93, 471-72.
28. "What Ridgway Told Ike," *U.S. News & World Report*, 25 June 1954, pp. 30-32.
29. Ridgway, Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, 22 April 1954, Box 30, Ridgway Papers.
30. In his memoirs, General Ridgway judged that the Army position "played a considerable, perhaps a decisive, part in persuading our government not to embark on that tragic adventure." See *Soldier*, p. 277.
31. Herring, p. 32; Chalmers Roberts, "The Day We Didn't Go to War," in *Vietnam: History, Documents and Opinions on a Major World Crisis*, ed. by Marvin Gettleman (Greenwich: Fawcett, 1965), pp. 96-99; and *Chronology of Actions on the Subject of Indochina*.
32. Herring and Immerman, pp. 350-62; and Richard Nixon, *RN* (New York: Warner Books, 1979), I, 189.
33. *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 94, 101; *Chronology of Actions on the Subject of Indochina*.
34. *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 105; Anthony Eden, *Full Circle: The Memoirs of Anthony Eden* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), pp. 100-19; Herring, p. 36. Additionally, by late April Admiral Radford had swung to the view that the battle lines around Dienbienphu had become so indistinguishable as to make an air strike ineffective. See Robert Donovan, *Eisenhower: The Inside Story* (New York: Harper, 1956), p. 264.
35. Herring, p. 37; *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 502-03; and *The Pentagon Papers*, New York Times edition, p. 12.
36. *The Pentagon Papers*, New York Times edition, p. 12. The draft presidential address can be found in the John Foster Dulles Papers (Box 82).
37. *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 511 (emphasis in original), 126-27, 509-15.
38. *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 126-27, 508-09. General Ridgway drafted the 19 May memorandum.
39. Herring, p. 38; *The Pentagon Papers*, Gravel edition, I, 131; and Herring and Immerman, p. 362.
40. Betts, p. 5; Petraeus, *The American Military and the Lessons of Vietnam* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Microfilms, 1987), p. 244.
41. Joseph Kraft, "Power and the Pentagon," *The Washington Post*, 8 April 1984, p. C7.